SCOTLAND'S Great Advantages BY AN UNION with ENGLAND:

Shewn in a

LETTER

From the

COUNTRY,

To a Member of

PARLIAMENT.

Printed in the Year MDCCVI.

SCOTLAND:

Its Advantages

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LICENSED VICTUALLER;

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To a Member of

PARLIAMENT.

SIR,

I am glad you got ſafe to *Edinburgh*, and that you tell me the Parliament is now met: And though you know my Buſineſs is not, nor do I much medle in the Affairs of State, yet ſince you honour me ſo far, as to value and ask my Opinion concerning the intended Union of the Two Kingdoms, I ſhall not altogether Decline Obedience to your Commands, nor interupt your better thoughts, by any prolix Argumentation, but plainly and impartially tell you, that I wiſh nothing more than the Proſperity and Welfare of my Country, and know no better means to Procure the ſame, than by Uniting on ſuch Honourable and Advantageous terms, as are ſaid to have been Agreed to in the late Treaty; which you ſay was Read in Parliament, and Ordered to be Publiſhed for the Satisfaction of the whole Nation, who ought in gratitude to honour the Perſons and Memory of thoſe, who ſo Induſtriouſly and Indefatigably beſtir'd themſelves to procure them. And this I ſay, without any Byaſs or Obligation to any Party: For you know, I have not the honour to ſhare in the Publick Management, nor ever Enjoyed any other Benefit from the Government, but what is common to all my Fellow Subjects.

I need not tell you the Unhappineſs of both Nations for many Ages, of Feuds, Rapins, Open-Wars and Devaſtations, and and the many Unſucceſsful Attempts made towards a Happy Union, till ſo Great and Good a Deſign ſhould be Perfected, and Accompliſhed in the Days of a Queen, who is as Formidable to Her Enemies, by Her Victorious Arms, as She's Lov'd of Her Subjects, for the benign Influences of Her Government. Now, inſtead of theſe Calamities, let us Conſider what our Hopes and Expectations may be from the Union of the Two

Nations in one Body, under one Head, and Join'd in the ſame common Intereſt.

And Firſt, as to Religion. One great Happineſs of our *Iſland* is, that we very early, received the Principles of Chriſtianity, which are now Taught and Eſtabliſhed amongſt us, Reform'd from the Novelties and Superſtitions of the Church of *Rome*. And though our Fatal Diviſions about the leſs Eſſential Parts of Religion, have done no ſmall prejudice, to the Peace and Quiet of the Church and Sate of both Nations; Yet, by God's bleſſing, it hath been preſerved againſt all the ſecret machinations and open deſigns of its Enemies: and, by a firm Union of the Two Nations, may continue to be the Bulwark of the Proteſtant Religion and Intereſt.

I intend not to Examine the different Views and Incouragement, Parties and Factions may have from it, but in the general it is evident, that we are hereby Secured againſt the common Enemy; and if we cannot Hope to be United in Form of Worſhip, yet we may ſee more of the Spirit of Moderation, and not grudge the Indulgeing our Diſſenting Brethren, in the way and manner of Serving God, that is not contrarie to His Word, and moſt agreeable to the Dictats of their own Conſciences, Whereas without this, and by a conſtant Struggling and Contention of Parties, the common Enemy may catch his opportunity of Ruining both. You know me too well to think me Inſlav'd into the opinion of Men, which is not founded on infallible Truth and Right Reaſon; and that my Principles are not ſo narrow and confin'd, as to exclude ſuch who are not of the ſame opinion with my ſelf about Church-Government and form of Worſhip, from the Title and Hopes of a good Chriſtian; Yet I ſhall never wiſh to ſee Idolatry and Superſtition prevail, which muſt be the neceſſary Attendants of a Popiſh Succeſſor: And whoever oppoſes the good Intentions of a Union, either Maliciouſly or Ignorantly Promots theſe two Miſchiefs to his Country, with many others that I ſhall not Name.

And

And as an Union Secures our Religion, ſo it Procures the Safety, Proſperity and Peace of *Britain*. It could be eaſily Prov'd from Hiſtory, that all the Advantages gain'd over this *Iſland* by Foreign Enemies and Invaſions, were owing to the diviſions ſeparat Intereſts found therein, which by an Union are remov'd, and the *Iſland* able to Defend it ſelf againſt any Attack from Abroad, and in a condition to give Laws to their Neighbours: Which ſome of them well-foreſeeing, are not a little jealous of it, which ſhould encourage us the more cordially to joyn in it, eſpecially ſince it's proſer'd with ſo many advantages, as could have ſcarce been expected, and never before Procur'd.

That the advantages of it will equally redound to both Nations, is evident from this, that hereby are communicated and made common the proper benefits, and Product of both Kingdoms, and by ſuch an Intercours every body will be active in ſome buſſineſs whereby he may better his own Fortune, and provide for his Family. Our *Iſle* produces all things for the conveniency of Human Life, and our Seas are Stored with variety of excellent Fiſhes, which offer themſelves at certain Seaſons to our hands, and yet are neglected, though the Catching them might Imploy and Inrich many Thouſands who live very Idle and Miſerable. Our Earth covers Treaſurs of rich Minerals, which either our little Art or leſs Activity, cannot dig up and diſcover to the Publick Advantage. Nay, the very things about which our People are moſt commonly Imployed, cannot be Exported to any tollerable Profit. Whereas by a Union I foreſee a Spirit of Trade and Induſtry, to prompt every Body to undertake ſomething of this kind, when they can expect to Reap the Benefit of their Labours.

But then by a Union, we are ſecured of Peace; one of the greateſt of Bleſſings. None that know any thing of our Hiſtory, can be ignorant, how fatal the ancient Wars betwixt the two Nations were to both, and what Devaſtations and Depredations were daily committed. And can any thing

more

more effectually prevent those Mischiefs for the future, than an Union? When of one we shall be two People, have the same common Cause and Interest to pursue: No longer influenc'd by foreign States, to the Destruction of one another, but be able to stand our Ground against their Insults; and our Island be one of those fortunate ones which no Enemy dares penetrate. Every body will allow that *Britain* produces as good Men, for Arts and Arms, as *Europe* can afford; and have distinguisht themselves so Honourably in all the late Actions abroad, that 'tis to be hop'd the very name of our United Island may strick an awe and dread on the proudest of our Nighbours.

I do not say that by an Union all degrees of Discord and Dissention will be prevented: For as in the humane so in the politick Body, Some unnatural Ferments and Convulsions may arise, which by the direction of a skilful Physician may be Corrected: But the Danger is greater, when a cruel Enemy attacks with Sword in hand, and threatens without Mercy, to stab it to the Heart. In a Family there may happen quarrels and divisions among the Domesticks, which yet hazard not the House so much, as when it is assaulted by Ruffians and Robbers, ready to cut the Throats of both Master and Servants. And therefore when our Island becomes one Body or one common Family, every Part and Member of it will contribute to the Good and Safety of the whole.

In a word, *Sir*, a Union has been ever thought so much for the Peace and Safety of *Britain*, and so often attempted, that it's to contradict common Sense, and the voice of Mankind to deny it. And therefore I apprehend the Mistakes that are about it, proceed from some other Cause, and shall charitably suppose the Opposers of it to have no other worse Design and View, than that they conceive it not entirely for the advantage of *Scotland*.

But

But if they will allow themſelves to Reaſon calmly, and without Prejudice, they will find that if the whole Iſland Gain by it, then *Scotland* muſt have its ſhare of the Advantage, and be in a quite other condition of Thriveing than it is at preſent. No doubt *England* expects Benefit by it, and we have no reaſon to grudge it, if *Scotland* get more than the equivalent. *England* ſecures an old and dangerous Enemy to be their Friend, and thereby peace at Home, and in more ſafety to carry on Deſigns abroad. *Scotland* will not be allarm'd by the Threatnings of a powerful and rich Neighbour, nor ſo eaſily put under the yoke of a foreign Enemy. *England* gains a conſiderable addition of brave and courageous Men, to their Fleet, Armies and Plantations: and we ſecured by their Protection, and inriched by their Labours. We ſend our Commodities and uſeful Manufactures to them, and have Money or other Neceſſaries remitted to us. They have free acceſs to all our Seas and Ports, are capable of all Privileges of Burgers or Citizens: and we the ſame among them, can plant Colonies at a cheaper Rate, and with more Aſſurance than formerly; will ſee our Artificers improve, and our Land better Cultivated and Manur'd.

But though we could not reckon thir Advantages by it, and many others which I omit, this one conſideration may be of ſome moment, that by it we may, and by all probability, will be in a better, but can be in no worſe Condition than we have been for many Years paſt, and without it, may be ſtill worſe. It's a general complaint, that ſince our King's lived in *England*, our States-Men have been obliged to go there for the Affairs of the Nation, and many drawn after them by hopes of Preferment, and others by Idleneſs and a vain Curioſity, whereby this Kingdom has been ſenſibly drain'd of Money, and our Affairs brought under the influence of others, Who had no right to determine in them. All this muſt be acknowledged to have been, and will continue to

be

to be, as long as we are two Bodies under one Head, or two Kingdoms with different Intereſts, and ſo vaſtly diſproportionable in Strength and Riches. For, can it be reaſonably ſuppos'd or expected, but that, after all the *Limitations* and Precautions the wiſeſt Parliament can make, the weakeſt of two Kingdoms, under one Governour, will be neglected, when their Intereſts run croſs?

This has been our Caſe for many Years, and now we have a fair opportunity of remeding all thoſe Griveances, and preventing the hazard and miſchiefs of a Civil War, which may end in our utter Ruin and eternal Slavery, by an honourable and advantageous Union, which perhaps can never be procur'd hereafter, tho never ſo much wiſht for, when the occaſion is loſt. And to tell you my Thoughts ingenuouſly, as our Circumſtances now are with *England*, and as we ſtand with our Neighbours Abroad, I think the matter may be reduced to this Alternative, either Union with Peace and Plenty, or Diſ-Union with Slavery and Poverty.

When I conſider theſe things more at length (which I only hint at here) I wonder there ſhould be any found, to oppoſe or marr ſo good a Deſign. And yet in the little converſation I have, I can diſcover three ſorts of Men guilty of this, for very different Reaſons and Accounts.

Some through miſtake and ill Intelligence, fear their beloved Model and Form of Church Government, may be thereby undermined and pull'd down: And this very induſtriouſly inſinuated to them by no hearty Well-wiſhers to their Cauſe and Intereſt. For they will at laſt be ſatisfied that care enough has been taken to ſecure that precious Jewel. But ſuppoſe it were not, to thoſe who are not fully perſuaded of its divine Inſtitution, nor regard it as a conſtituent part of the of the Chriſtian and Reform'd Religion; it would be no ſuffi-

cient

cient reaſon to oppoſe the common Good and Advantage of of the Iſland therefore. But ſince both Epiſcopalians and Presbyterians may be encouraged with the hopes of ſo much good from it, I think there ſhould be no diſpute on this Head.

Others, beſides Roman Catholicks, who have no other deſign but to raiſe their Fortunes on the ruins of the Government, and of all that's Sacred and Civil amongſt us; cry out no Union, nor will hear of the ſame Succeſſor with *England*, having their Eyes on another, whom though they Name not, yet 'tis eaſy to gueſs whom they mean; but not ſo eaſy to fathom their Reaſons and Inducements. If they be true Hearted *Scotſmen*, they will not ſtrive to advance the Intereſt of any Prince, to the diſadvantage of their Country. And to promote any to the Throne of *Britain*, is plainly to leave *Scotland* in the ſame lurch and circumſtances, wherein we have complain'd it to have been thoſe many Years bypaſt. *Melius exilium eſt tibi, quam reditus iſte: crimine alieno exulas, tuo redibis.* Seneca *in* Theb.

A third ſort of Men, tho no declar'd Enemies to an Union, but ſeem to wiſh it, yet muſt be ſtill quarrelling at ſomething; and alledge, all things were not carried on, in the late Treaty, to the Honour and Advantage of *Scotland*: For no other reaſon, I ſuppoſe, but becauſe they were not call'd to it, or rather that they envy the Honour of thoſe who were ſo Inſtrumental in procuring ſo good Terms. To whom I may apply that of the Poet,

Dum malus obtrectat facta immortalia livor,
Nec ſinit adjutas ductoris creſcere laudes

And indeed I'm the more perſuaded of this, when I conſider the weakneſs of their Objections and Prejudices againſt it. Why, ſay they, to give up and yeild our Sovereignty: No more

more a Parliament in *Scotland*: To be Repreſented by a few Delegates in a *Britiſh* Parliament: No more the Name of the Ancient Kingdom: our Noblemen and Peers to loſe their Birth-Right: And a great deal more to this purpoſe: Which are only ſpecious Pretences and plauſible Arguments, to ſtartle ſuch, who, not underſtanding the Reaſons and Cauſes of Things, are eaſily impoſed on to entertain groundleſs Jealouſies, and be frighted with Words.

You know, *Sir*, that on all Occaſions the private life and capacity I am in, give me, I have appear'd, and ſtill am, as much as any *Scotſman*, for aſſerting the Honour, Independency and Rights of my Country; and am not inſenſible of the Attempts made upon them, nor of the hazard wherein they may be hereafter, if we take not right Meaſures to prevent it. Our Eyes are now open'd, to ſee the Error of ſcruing up the Prerogative ſo high; to which both the contending Parties amonſt us gave their Hands by turns. For, as the Government either favour'd or protected them, they were ready to go into the Meaſures of it. And though much has been ſaid and done in the late Parliaments, to recover our Rights and Liberties; yet nothing in my opinion can more effectually ſecure them to the benefit of the Nation in general, than an honourable Union, as it's now intended; wherein we are to meet our Neighbours but half way, who come with equal Conceſſions, and ſcruple not the alteration of Names and Words, when the thing is ſtill the ſame.

I ſhall not trouble you with a particular anſwer to the Objections here hinted at, knowing you to be too wiſe to perceive any weight or ſolidity in them. For when they are managed with all the Art and Force their Formers can give them, they are not to be laid in the Ballance, nor will have any proportion to the univerſal good and benefit of the Nation. Has it not been the general wiſh of all *Scotſmen*, to be in other Terms and Circumſtances with *England* than we have

been

been for many Years? And now when we are in a fair way of being ſo, to oppoſe it is no ſmall degree of Fickleneſs and Inconſtancy.

I reckon our Sovereignty and Independency to be more aſſerted in this Union, and by the Treaty about it intended, than we have had the occaſion to do of a long time: And if we were to yeild it upon the account of any falſe or pretended *Superiority* over *Scotland* by *England*, or any other Nation whatſoever; I think no honeſt *Scotſman*, but would proteſt againſt it: Or if any ſuch Conveyance or Submiſſion were intended as was made by *Balliol* to the *Engliſh*, and offer'd by Queen *Mary* to the *French* in a ſecret Article of her Marriage with the then *Dauphin* of *France*, dated the 4th of *April* 1557, as it's to be found at large in *Recueil de Traitez* &c. 1 2. *p.* 510.

But here two Nations equally Free and Independent one of another, are willing to become One, under one Sovereign, not regarding old Names by which they were diſtinguiſht; but as they are Inhabitants of one Iſland, ſo to go under the common Name of it: And though there were never another Parliament to meet at *Edinburgh*, what's the loſs, if our Laws and Liberties be preſerv'd in one elſe where? And who knows but the reaſons of State and Government, may occaſion ſome Parliaments to ſit in this Northern part of our Iſle? For, I ſuppoſe it will be made no neceſſary qualification of a *Britiſh* Parliament, that it ſhould always meet at *London*. And tho this part of *Brittain* had fewer Repreſentatives, than are ſaid to be agreed to in the Treaty, yet we are not to fear the worſe Treatment for that, no more than the City of *London* does, which ſends no more Members, than a Town not ſo large by the hundred part. For, by an Union, we are no more two but one Body, and who will hurt his own Fleſh?

I confeſs, of all ranks and degrees of Men amongſt us, our Noblemen have the moſt to object, who ſeem to be debar'd from the Privilege of their Peerage; and yet every Baron may

have the same pretence in a *Scots* Parliament. But it is to be hop'd, their Lordships will not lay their personal Rights and Pretensions in the ballance with the good of the whole Nation. And I see no loss their Families will suffer by their keeping at Home, when the Expences of a Parliament Journey, may be more than many of them can well bear.

You know with what severity and rigidness many of our Tenents are treated by their Lords and Lairds; and would it not be a mighty relief to them to be freed from such Tyrany, and equally beneficial to the Nation to have the Art of improving Land, and many other things introduc'd amongst us, which I hope will be the consequence of a happy Union. What is it that has made so much ods betwixt *Scotland* and *England*, in the Riches of the People, and Product of the Ground, but their Trade and Industry? And what has more hindred our Thriving therein, than the exaction of many Masters upon their Tenants and Servants? Our Land is generally rackt and over-valued in the Rent, and the Leases given for so short a time, that the Tenants are no ways encourag'd to Improve it, either to their own or Masters advantage, nor can hardly gain a tolerable Living by their Toil and Labour: Whereas every body that knows any thing of *England*, sees the contrary there, and may expect to see it among our selves, by such a communication as will attend an Union.

I need say nothing of the encouragement our Merchants and Trading Men have to joyn cordially in it, they of all others having the faireſt hopes of being Gainers, not only by an open and free Trade, but in Company and Societies with others, who will infallibly be invited to come and live amongst us, by the convenient situation of our Ports to foreign Places, and the great benefit to be made by the Fishing in our Seas; and what advantage this will be to us, I leave you to judge.

Thus, *Sir*, I have very briefly and ingenuously given you my thoughts of an Union, without any particular expectation of advantage to my self; which if they seem Just and Reasonable, you can improve in your publick Occasions; and if I err or mistake, I hope you'll shew me wherein: For I know I write to one who is not acted and led by the sole influence of Parties or Factions, but by solid Reason, and the true Interest of our Country, to which I vow my self a hearty well-wisher, and am,

SIR,

Your most humble Servant,